



March 2003

newsletter

Annual General Meeting 2003

The AGM will be at 7.30pm on **Thursday 20 March** in the upstairs room at the Star & Garter in Silsoe. Please come along if you possibly can as it is your opportunity to have a say about the running of the club. The provisional agenda is as follows:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of 2002 AGM and matters arising
3. Reports:
 - Chairman**
 - Secretary (to include Publicity)**
 - Treasurer**
 - CA Tournament Secretary**
 - Club Tournament Secretary**
 - Club Captain**
 - Groundsman (to include Equipment)**
 - Catering**
4. Election of officers
5. Club events for 2003
6. Tournament catering for 2003
7. EACF events for 2003 and information from AGM
8. Coaching and development
9. Revised constitution
10. Any other business

- The minutes of the 2002 AGM have been circulated and will be available at the AGM. If you can't attend the meeting but want a topic discussed, let me know and I can raise it under AOB.
- You should have received your own membership form. **Please check the details** and make any corrections before you return the form with your subscription. We need more catering volunteers, so **if you can help with serving food and washing up at tournaments please say so on the form.**
- The distinction between the membership categories is that all full members have keys to the equipment shed, whereas group members come as a group with a nominated keyholder. As a general rule Monday evenings are for golf croquet and Thursdays for Association. Other than that you can all play what you like whenever you like, but remember to check the events diary for tournament Fridays and other bookings, and to sign in at the mansion when playing during working hours on weekdays.

2003 subscriptions

- **It is proposed that for 2003 the membership fee be £45.60 (including £6.10 CA levy) for full members and £13 for group members.**
- The green fee for visitors remains at £3.50 per person per session, and is payable by guests of members and visiting groups. Please record these payments in the Visitor's Book in the pavilion.

Going Underground



This impressive excavation appeared last autumn by the side of lawn 5. Groundsman George Collin beat down the earth with a spade. Whether he sang *Look out kid, you're gonna get hit*¹ as he did so is not recorded. The mole appears to have taken the hit.

¹ from *Subterranean Homesick Blues* (Bob Dylan). Reprinted without permission.

We do like Mondays

If the lawns get busy on Monday evenings you must be prepared to double-bank, i.e. play two games on the same lawn using first and second colour balls. With six lawns (only five clubs in the country have more) we have room for 24 playing singles or 48 playing doubles. If there are insufficient balls in the little hut use the club balls in the locker in the pavilion (just the old Jaques balls, please leave the Barlow GTs and the Dawsons). We have 31 club mallets, which is more than enough if two players share. If you play regularly it is worth considering buying your own mallet - there are catalogues in the file in the pavilion.

If the lawns are still full it would seem reasonable for those who have already been in play for some time to defer to those who can't get down till later in the day. Remember you are free to play when you like (but see

opposite). If there's still a problem, tell us, and don't forget to enter the group members' golf croquet tournament - it's all yours this year!

Spring cleaning - 22/23 March

We hope to do some work on the lawns over the weekend following the AGM, and also spring clean the huts. If you can spare a few hours on either day please ring George Collin.

Events diary

March 16	EACF AGM (Black Boy, Bury St Edmunds)
April 12	Easter Egg 2003
April 20-21	EH St George's Day event
May 16-18	Handicap tournament
May 20	Hertford U3A coaching (first of five Tuesday morning sessions)
June 8	EACF Chairman's Day (Norwich)
June 10	Dunstable U3A group (evening, all lawns booked)
July 4-6	Advanced tournament
July 8	Dunstable U3A group (evening, all lawns booked)
July 10	Surrey University group (afternoon, all lawns booked)
July 20	EACF Club Champions Tournament (Colchester)
July 25-27	Eastern Championship
Aug 9-10	Advanced tournament
Sept 13-14	Handicap tournament

Anyone wishing to enter the Easter Egg competition should contact Rod Ashwell by the end of March - it is a light-hearted tournament whose format depends on the number and standard of the entries.

Details of other English Heritage events taking place at Wrest Park can be had by ringing 0870 333 1181 or from www.english-heritage.org.uk. The EH number at Wrest Park is 01525 860152.

EACF/NT tournaments 2003

The East Anglian Croquet Federation are holding tournaments at the following NT properties. Entries are invited from CA clubs or other groups.

Melford Hall, Long Melford, near Sudbury, Suffolk
Anglesey Abbey, Lode, near Cambridge
Felbrigg Hall, Felbrigg, near Cromer, Norfolk
Ickworth House, Horringer, near Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk

Short Croquet - 2 small lawns at each venue. 4 teams of 2 players at each venue. Singles and doubles. 14 point handicap play. Play from 10.30-5.

June 29	Melford Hall
July 13	Anglesey Abbey
July 27	Anglesey Abbey
August 10	Felbrigg Hall
Sept 7	Ickworth (Final)

Golf croquet - 2 small lawns at each venue. Doubles - up to 16 teams. Singles - as many as possible. 30 minute time limits. Play from 10-6.30.

July 12	Anglesey Abbey	Doubles
Sept 7	Ickworth	Singles

I have entry forms, so you want to enter as an individual or as a doubles pair either come to the AGM or give me a call. It is a good day out and you get plenty of time to go round the houses and gardens.

The Old Oak at Holm



The evergreen holm oak that stood next to lawn 2 lost a bough in last autumn's gales, and the whole tree has been cut down and the stump burnt out. It is now much as you see it here: a dark excrescence waiting to blacken the clothes of inquisitive children.

April coaching course planned

We are intending to run a series of coaching sessions early in the season, aimed at high-bisque players and Golf Croquet players who would like to know more about the Association game. There would be weekly sessions, probably for six weeks, starting in April. They could be at the weekend, or say, a Tuesday or Wednesday evening. If you are interested, please contact Peter Newman (01525 222446 or dpjnewman@supanet.com) so we can be sure there is enough interest to run it, and decide the time that suits most people.

Secretary's report for 2002

We now have a membership database. If you were wondering why the county no longer appears in your address it is because the Royal Mail no longer uses them (see www.pol.royalmail.com/dda/home.htm - the home of lost postcodes). If you can think of useful applications for the database please let me know, and I am always grateful for any comments on or pieces for the newsletter.

We have purchased two new booklets: a copy of John Riches' coaching manual on (Association) Croquet Technique, and a copy of the CA's Guide to Golf Croquet. Both can be found in the pavilion. We also have maps of the park which may be useful for those fancying a walk, be they tournament players with a bye or visitors who quickly realise that croquet is not a riveting spectator sport. Please make use of them.

John Bevington

7 March 2003

P.S. As an inducement to your attending the AGM there will be a free bar up to the value of £36 courtesy of our winning the Village Hall Quiz. First come, first served.